

# The Washington Times.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1904.

## The Oriental Situation.

### Diplomacy of Russia and Japan Comes to a Deadlock.

Russia and Japan are still reported to be on the verge of war. It is still, however, doubtful whether some compromise may not be reached. If either country can see its way clear to peace with honor, there is no doubt that this end will be sought. Neither Russia nor Japan is as eager for war as readers of the news may be inclined to think. Russia is not entirely prepared for such a struggle, involving, as it may, the interests of European countries as well as those of Japan, and Japan fully recognizes the risks she would take in the event of actual hostilities. It should not be inferred, however, that Japan is playing a mere game of bluff. She is in earnest, and rather than submit to conditions which threaten her independence, she will fight, but she will not fight for any less reason.

The Russian proposition, providing for the creation of a "neutral zone," including a third of Korea, reminds one of the preliminary negotiations for the partition of Poland. Russian diplomacy does not consider the patriotism of a small nation as worth much attention, and the feelings of the Koreans in the matter are not taken into account. Japan, on the contrary, would, if assuming the position of protector of Korea, pursue a policy which would probably in course of time attach the Koreans to her. It is to the interests of Japan to preserve the independence of Korea so far as any outside interference is concerned. She is formulating a sort of Monroe Doctrine to suit the occasion.

But one thing must not be overlooked in the consideration of war or the chances of war in the Far East. Both the Japanese and the Russian governments are actuated more by considerations of statesmanship and the ultimate interests of their respective countries than by any other motive. The state of popular feeling plays a much smaller part in this affair than it would in a situation of the same kind between England and France, for example. It would be impossible for Japanese popular sentiment, however red-hot, to force the government to declare war. The Russian masses know little, and care less about affairs in the Orient. Thus it is possible for the diplomats of the two countries to work out the problem with the carefulness and coolness of players in a game of chess. There is no such unforeseen pressure of public opinion as upset Mr. McKinley's calculations at the time of the Maine disaster, and probably would, in the event of serious difficulty with England, force this country into war whether the Government wished it or not. The question is entirely, or almost entirely—for popular feeling cannot entirely be disregarded—in the hands of cautious, clear-headed, subtle men, determined and far-sighted on the one side, cautious yet daring on the other. The correspondence and conversation of the two governments would make interesting reading, but it will never be known in its entirety.

## Injudicious Advertising.

### Methods of Business Which Irritate the Public.

America has been much abused for its ingenious and often annoying methods of advertising, but when England does make up her mind to do anything of that sort America is nowhere. The "London Times," guardian of conservatism and tradition, wished to bring before the public its special prices for the "Encyclopedia Britannica." Having exhausted other means of advertising, and incidentally the patience of some of its readers, it caused to be sent out reminders in the form of telegrams to the number of 150,000.

Of course, these telegrams were prepaid, but imagine the irritation of those who were startled into thinking that some of their friends were dead, or their mothers-in-law coming to see them, or their stocks wiped out, or something of that sort! Would they want to buy an article whose advertising gave them so uncomfortable a shock? Hardly.

It is strange that the firms which in-

dulge in this tactless and irritating sort of advertising do not understand that where one person may buy their wares as a result of having them thrust in his face, ten will throw the reminder away in disgust and resolve not to buy that article if any possible substitute is to be found. People do not like being taken by the collar and told that they must buy things. The day for that sort of business talent is past.

## The Democratic Situation.

### Difficulty in Selecting a Candidate Where There Is None.

The trouble of the Democratic party this year is of a kind somewhat unique. It is an aggravated case of the office seeking the man. The one man who has been stalked most persistently and most tactfully, one Grover Cleveland, of Princeton, N. J., refuses to be lured from his comfortable home, his life of leisure, and his duck hunting, into any such hurly-burly as the Democratic campaign of this year, with him as its candidate, would surely be. Thus far he appears to be the only candidate for whom the party could and would put up a stiff and stubborn fight. With Cleveland against Roosevelt it would be a case of pistols and coffee for two and fight to a finish. But Mr. Cleveland declines to be bothered.

Judge Parker, of New York, is mentioned, but it is feared he will not be acceptable to Tammany. Bryan has not mentioned himself, but some people think he is looking wistfully over the fence. The result of his nomination, however, could hardly be expected to be more encouraging than it was at the height of the free silver discussion, since nobody now talks silver, and many of the qualities in which Bryan's personal strength lay are possessed in an even greater degree by Roosevelt, so that his fearlessness could no longer be contrasted with an opponent's caution, his independence with the other man's conservatism. Bryan is out of it. Hearst has been mentioned, but who wants a political campaign conducted by megaphone?

The remote cause of this condition of things is, of course, the make-up of the party. Composed of at least three strong factions with varying interests, it is almost impossible to find a candidate who will not offend some one of these, or be a nonentity without enough character to offend any thing. The South is, of course, its stronghold. Southern Democrats are a class by themselves, strong in inherited political principle, a few old-fashioned prejudices, and remarkable alertness where the interests of their part of the country are concerned. These interests are not and cannot be identified with those of New York city or the West; yet the Western farmers form a strong wing of the party if they can be brought into line, and all agree that success is not possible unless New York is safe. Only a man of powerful personality, conservative nature, and independence of spirit can handle this combination together, and Mr. Cleveland is such a man. He, however, declines to act as a hitching post; and who else is in sight? The time is ripe, perchance, for another Cleveland.

## Improvement Worth Making.

### One Result of English Occupation of Egypt.

The "Egyptian Gazette" is responsible for the statement that the Assouan dam across the Nile has proved so useful that it will be raised to the height originally contemplated. By means of this dam 170,000 acres of basin land are irrigated, and their value enhanced to the amount of \$25,000,000. It is believed that the value of the dam will be nearly doubled by the proposed continuation of the work.

This is the kind of good government which any country, even the Oriental, ought to be able to appreciate. The glory of the British Empire lies not so much in its military efficiency as in the things which this military efficiency is intended to maintain—irrigation, bridge building, sanitary improvements, a better state of things for all the subject races. The monuments of which England has reason to be most proud in India are of this kind—irrigation works, by which desert lands have been made fertile; bridges, by which supplies can be quickly transported; jungle laws, strictly enforced, by which lands are reforested; strong police protection, by which different factions of natives are kept from flying at each other's throats. The civil engineer, in his burning desert or on the banks of his malarial river, accomplishing his ends with insufficient native aid, in spite of flood, drought, superstitions of natives or lethargy on the part of his superior, is the prosaic hero of the nineteenth century, a hero to whom we ourselves owe much for his

intrepid bridging of chasms and tunneling of mountains, and his manifold other services in the pioneer days of our civilization. Too many times the greed, indifference, or unscrupulous haste of his employers prevents the engineer from doing the job as he knows it should be done; yet some of them stand like rocks for safe, sure work with which they need not be ashamed to associate their names. All honor to the engineers.

There is an editorial article in this morning's "Post" about the duty of fixing the responsibility for disasters, which indicates that the "Post" is gradually getting around to editorial notice of the Ironsides Theater fire.

The harmony at the Democratic dinner was somewhat reminiscent of melodies from the concert of the powers.

"Harper's Weekly" prints two letters about the negro question in the South, both from Raleigh, N. C. one of which says: "You are right in saying that no negroes are allowed to go into Mitchell county in this State." The other says: "It is a matter of great surprise that 'Harper's Weekly' should publish the statement that no negro is permitted to enter Mitchell county, North Carolina. For the past three decades more than 500 negroes were permitted to live in that county at the time of each census taking."

This is perfectly beautiful. Senator Platt says that socialism enters the White House with any Democratic President. Mr. Cleveland has been called many things, but never before a Socialist.

All that is now left for Senator Gorman is to pick up the pieces and see where he is hurt.

Representative Burgess of Texas has been explaining to the House what is meant by the expression "stand pat." If he thinks nobody outside Texas knows what he had better learn a few things.

People who quit going to theaters until they are assured of safety present an argument which the box office can understand without the least bit of trouble.

The wicked stand in slippery places, and so does everybody except the ash man while this icy weather lasts. The dollar dinner in the Lincoln Hotel may not have as many courses as that other dinner at Sherry's, but it will make up for that in the splendor of its adjectives and the pungency of its expletives.

Mr. Labouchere says the climate of England kills half the people and the cooking of England the other half. If all the population of England is dead Mr. Labouchere is at least a lively ghost.

They are fattening Texas turkeys on the boll weevil, while the scientists are hunting around Peru to get something to exterminate the insect.

Mr. Olney says that we have had a surfeit of sensations and spectacles, and then proceeds to make a sensation and a spectacle himself.

Oklahoma has a railroad chartered to run from the North Pole to the Southern Cross, and from Hades to breakfast. An excursion party should be made up for this road, including Peary, Dowie, Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., Admiral Evans, and Dr. Parkhurst.

All the honest merchants who have been selling real asbestos are now reaping the reward of their honesty. It is an ill wind which blows nobody good.

Testimony is coming in from former ushers and employees of various theaters regarding their fire appliances. It is time somebody talked.

The public can now figure out this little sum: If it will cost \$1,000 to put a theater in safe condition, and \$50 fine if the owners are caught keeping it in unsafe condition, how long will it take the owners to make improvements?

The cotton planters are now wondering whether the hoodoo in thirteen-cent cotton means the boll weevil.

It is said with horror that of the two thousand convicts in the Ohio penitentiary, not one can repeat the Ten Commandments correctly. The same might be true of two thousand people in some churches. Try it and see.

Dr. Wiley's poison squid is to have a three weeks' vacation. Think of eating turkey and mince pie for three weeks and then going back to asafetida.

A careful citizen complains that museums and other public buildings in New York are too hot to be healthy for visitors. He thinks that the clerks who work there might wear extra coats. Could not the visitors take off theirs?

It has been discovered that audiences at free lectures in New York are sometimes locked in. This sounds bad for the quality of the lecture.

New York is getting acquainted with Little Mary, but it is not thought that the citizens of that town will thereby be induced to forsake the Welsh rabbit and the cocktail for the shredded wheat biscuit.

The "Boston Transcript" avers that a good round oath is better than ingrown profanity. Ingrown profanity must be what is the matter with Senator Hearst.

We are told that five thousand distinct tongues are spoken among men. As this estimate does not mention women, it is to be supposed that baby-talk is not included.

A Washington attorney was robbed the other day at Council Bluffs. This seems to be a case of counsel bluffing.

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Sailing north from the United States about the last of next July, I should take on board my Eskimos, establish my permanent sub-base at Cape Sabine and then make every effort to force my ship to the northern shore of Grant Land, establishing as far as practicable en route generous caches and possibly one or two small colonies of Eskimos.

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Should the ice conditions of the first year be such as to negative my reaching the desired winter quarters I should winter at the best practicable point north and push the ship to the northern shore of Grant Land the second summer, beginning my sledge journey in the second February after my departure, and returning in that event in September or October of the second year, after an absence of twenty-seven months.

This plan is the result of some twelve years of almost continuous experience in high latitudes, and is based upon an extended personal acquaintance with the region from Cape York to St. Lawrence north latitude, and a thorough familiarity with climatic and other conditions, and with the Eskimos.

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Think of the satisfaction of lifting such a land out of the heart of the Polar Sea with the Stars and Stripes of "Old Glory!" Think of writing upon that land some name to endure indelibly till that day when "the heavens shall utter like a scroll," to show forever that we own the top of the earth!

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